



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

DEC 12 2002

Mr. Diego Velázquez
Chief of the Department of Inspection and HACCP Certification
Dirección General de Protección y Sanidad Agropecuaria
Ministerio Agropecuario y Forestal
Gobierno de Nicaragua
Managua, Nicaragua, C.A.

Dear Mr. Velázquez:

Enclosed is a copy of the final report of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) June 4-11, 2002, audit of Nicaragua's meat inspection system. We received your letter dated October 11, 2002, commenting on our draft final report of the same audit. This letter has been incorporated into the enclosed report as Attachment "G."

We appreciate your immediate attention to the deficiencies identified during the June 2002 audit and your declaration that the Nicaraguan Meat Inspection Service has taken the necessary steps to ensure the correction of the deficiencies. We also acknowledge verification by the Nicaraguan Government that corrective actions have been taken at Establishment #4, which was cited with a "30-day" notice for having an inadequate generic *Escherichia Coli* testing plan and poor execution of generic *E.coli* sampling procedures.

If you have any questions regarding the FSIS audit, please contact me at telephone number 202-720-3781, facsimile number 202-720-7990, or you may reach me at my email address (sally.stratmoen@fsis.usda.gov).

Sincerely,

Sally Stratmoen
Acting Director
Equivalence Staff
Office of International Affairs

Enclosure

cc. Alan Hrapsky, Attaché, US Embassy, Costa Rica
Mauricio Rivas, Commercial Attaché, Embassy of Nicaragua, Wash., DC
Flor Ortega, American Embassy, Managua
Robert Hoff, FAS Area Officer
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Country File (FY 2002 Audit)